

REMARKS

The Office Action dated February 6, 2003 has been received and carefully considered. The above amendments and the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the office action.

A minor and self-evident amendment to the specification has been made on page 6. The necessity for this amendment, which was discovered during prosecution of a corresponding foreign application, would have been easily understood by any person skilled in the art and hence the amendment does not involve new matter.

The drawings were objected to. In response to the objection, proposed drawings corrections to FIG. 12 and FIG. 13, in which these figures have been labeled to indicate that they illustrate the prior art, are attached with this response. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-4 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

The indicated limitation in claims 2, 3 and 4 has been revised for better agreement with the limitation set forth in the independent claim, and to clarify that the "single unit" is the same as that recited in claim 1.

Claim 6 has been amended in the manner suggested by the Examiner, although it is noted that a portion of original claim 6 has now been incorporated into the independent claim.

It is submitted that these amendments remedy the matters raised under Section 112 and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nagai et al. ('051).

The Examiner has identified various structural elements shown in Nagai et al. which are alleged to correspond to features set forth in the pending claims. Although some of the features shown in Nagai et al. may resemble elements of the claimed invention, it is respectfully submitted that the claimed "plates," "covers" and "return guides" are not shown or suggested by the cited reference.

In particular, the Examiner alleges that the "plates" are shown by element 46, the "covers" by element 48, and the "return guides" by elements 22 and 24 of Nagai et al.

However, as now set forth in amended claim 1, the claimed plates and covers are connected to and move together with the slider. Further, the claimed ball return guides serve for guiding a plurality of balls (76), are installed to side surfaces of the slider, and are accommodated within the claimed covers.

It is readily apparent upon observation that the "side and top covers" (46, 48) of Nagai et al. are not connected to the slider and therefore cannot move together with the slider (50) during reciprocating movement thereof, as now expressly claimed. Further, it is respectfully submitted that the cylinder tubes (22, 24) of Nagai et al. cannot properly be considered ball return

guides as now claimed, and it is also apparent that such cylinder tubes are not accommodated within the covers, as claimed.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the present application, including claims 1 to 10 as amended herein, is now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner's attention is drawn to related and copending U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/108,901. The copending application is directed to an actuator sharing certain structural features with the actuator described in the present specification. In the event the Examiner may consider this subject matter relevant to the prosecution of the present application, a copy of the copending application is enclosed, together with an Information Disclosure Citation form (PTO-1449); the Examiner is requested to initial and return a copy of this form with the next office action.

The IDS Fee of \$180.00 is enclosed and no other fees are due with this paper. Notwithstanding, should any fees be deemed due in connection with this or any related paper, such fees may be charged to the Attorney's Deposit Account No. 07-2519.

Respectfully submitted,



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